

THE
KU KLUX KLAN
OR
INVISIBLE EMPIRE

BY MRS. S. E. F. ROSE

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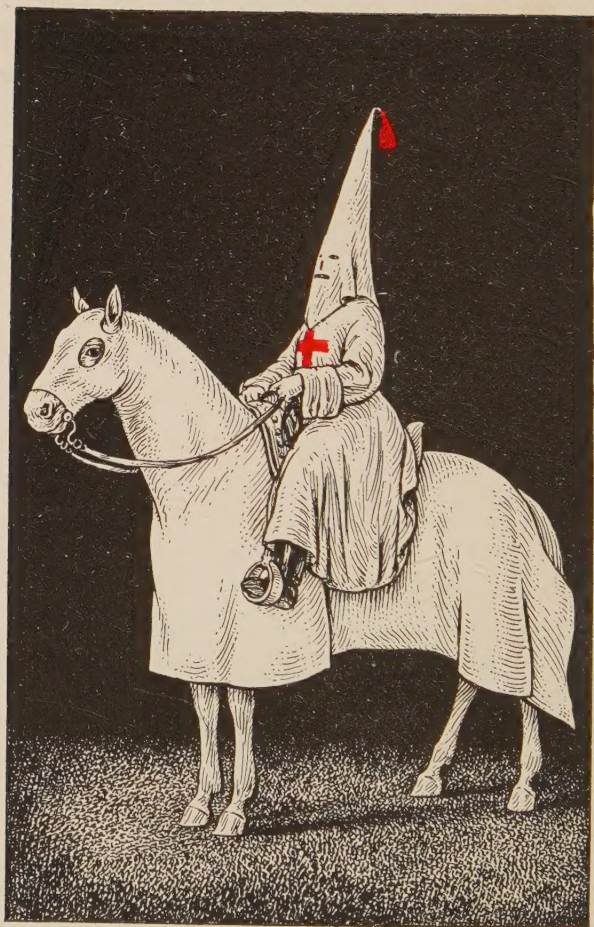
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MOUNTED KU KLUX.

THE KU KLUX KLAN

OR

INVISIBLE EMPIRE

BY

MRS. S. E. F. ROSE

Author of

"The U. D. C.—Its Object and Mission"

"The Confederate Picture Gallery"

"Arlington—Its Past and Present"

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By
MRS. S. E. F. ROSE,
West Point, Miss.

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DEDICATION.

THIS book is dedicated by the author to the Youth of the Southland, hoping that a perusal of its pages will inspire them with respect and admiration for the Confederate soldiers, who were the real Ku Klux, and whose deeds of courage and valor, have never been surpassed, and rarely equalled, in the annals of history.

INTRODUCTION.

THE Ku Klux had no written history. Their Constitution declared, "That the origin, mysteries, and ritual, of this order shall never be written, but shall be communicated orally." This secrecy was made necessary by existing conditions, and in no sense reflected upon the bravery of its members, for they were the "bravest of the brave." Even at this late day, it is difficult to secure information in regard to this mysterious Brotherhood, and many books of reference contain false statements about the Klan. To give a detailed history of the Ku Klux Klan, would require many volumes, for Klans were formed in all the Southern States, and their membership reached large numbers, estimated at half a million, but in this book may be found true and authentic history answering the following questions:

Who were the Ku Klux? Where did the Klan originate? What was its object and mission?

For the purpose of giving the youth of our land true history about this remarkable organization, whose services were of untold value to the South, during a dark period of her history, this book is written. The facts herein contained are absolutely authentic, being recorded from the lips of the survivors themselves.

MRS. S. E. F. ROSE.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

THE Author acknowledges with deepest gratitude the kind assistance of many Confederate Veterans and prominent men who were members of the Ku Klux Klan, who have furnished data and written incidents related in this book, also for the permission, so willingly given by Prof. Walter L. Fleming, Professor of History in the Louisiana State University, and author of book, entitled "Ku Klux Klan," to use paragraphs and pictures from his book. Also to many noble Southern women and to the widows of those brave men, Major James R. Crowe, and Mr. John B. Kennedy, last surviving Charter Members of the Klan, who furnished valuable data and photographs. The Author has been bidden "God Speed" by Confederate Veterans, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Daughters of the Confederacy, in the preparation of this history, which is a complete vindication of the Ku Klux Klan borne out by facts that are absolutely authentic, and statements from men who were members of the Klan, whose integrity is unquestioned. This book goes out to the world with a mission to perform: "To bring these truths of history directly to the youth of our land." The Author prays that its mission will be accomplished. The attractive illustrations and true history should make interesting reading for young and old, and for all those who hold the glorious deeds of our Southern Heroes in everlasting remembrance.

ENDORSEMENT.

THIS Book was unanimously endorsed by the United Daughters of the Confederacy, in Convention assembled at New Orleans, La., November 12-15, 1913, and co-operation pledged to endeavor to secure its adoption as a Supplementary Reader in the schools and to place it in the Libraries of our Land.

A Resolution to endorse this Book was adopted, without a dissenting voice, by the Sons of Confederate Veterans at Reunion May 6-8, 1914 at Jacksonville, Florida, and their efforts pledged to have it placed in the schools throughout the South.

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CHAPTER I.

THE KU KLUX KLAN.

Reasons For Its Existence.

THE Ku Klux Klan, or the Invisible Empire as it was also called, was an organization formed at the close of the war between the States, during the period known as Reconstruction, for the purpose of protecting the homes and women of the South.

The war terminated suddenly, and finally in the Spring of 1865. All resources of the Southern Armies were completely exhausted, and they laid down their arms as the result of being overpowered. General Robert E. Lee surrendered the Army of Northern Virginia at Appomattox, April 9, 1865, and this was quickly followed by all the other commands, so that in two months after the date of the surrender, there was not a Confederate soldier under arms throughout the entire South. The surrender, on the part of the Confederate armies, was universal and sincere; there was no reservation, and no desire to continue the struggle in any way.

Complete submission was given to the authority of the United States Government by all, those in official and private station as well. Notwithstanding this, Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States, was thrust into prison; other leaders of the Confederacy and distinguished citizens were arrested, and members of the Confederate Cabinet were forced to become exiles.

The condition of the South was deplorable indeed. Business destroyed, farms gone to wreck, homes laid waste, many of the returning soldiers disabled and broken in health. There was a track of desolation and devastation, without a parallel in history, estimated fully five miles wide, from the Tennessee line through Georgia to Savannah, through South Carolina, by Columbia, to North Carolina, and the desolation in the valley of Virginia, if possible, was greater.

No money, no stock to work the ground, and nothing at hand with which to begin life again, so it seemed. Four million slaves suddenly emancipated, with no realization whatever of the responsibilities that freedom brought.

Many negroes conceived the idea that freedom meant cessation from labor, so they left the fields,

crowding into the cities and towns, expecting to be fed by the United States Government. So agriculture the chief means of support in the South, was at a standstill. Railroads and other means of transportation were almost wrecked, and chaos reigned supreme.

To the general confusion was added a flood of adventurers from the North, called Carpet-baggers, who were not generally Northern soldiers; but mere camp followers of the Northern armies; men imbued with passions of the lowest order, settling in the South for the purpose of controlling the Southern States by becoming leaders of the negro voters, the best class of white people being excluded from voting by the Reconstruction measures of Congress.

These men hated everything that bore the name "Southern," and at once began to inflame the negroes against their former masters. They were told by these unprincipled men that the Southern people expected to put them back into slavery, and the United States Government was going to give every able-bodied negro man "Forty acres of land and a mule."

In this demoralized state of affairs, in many instances, private property was seized, and taken pos-

session of in the name of the United States Government. This was the situation, in 1865, at the South, exhausted, prostrated, disarmed, "overpowered, but not degraded."

And yet Hope remained, for many of those brave heroes,—the Confederate Soldiers—who endured all the hardships of those four terrible years of war, were still left to protect, with their last drop of blood, their beloved Southland.

These conditions, as described in the above lines, at the close of the War between the States, called into existence the Ku Klux Klan, and this organization proved the solution of a problem that confronted the South during the dark days of Reconstruction, and relieved a situation fraught with more terrors than the war itself.

The South was soon under what is known as the Carpet-Bag Regime; men without principle were in power, and negroes, already demoralized by their freedom, were elevated to the highest positions.

The Black and Tan Government, composed of Republican Carpet-baggers, home-made Yankees, or Scalawags, and ignorant and brutal negroes, now held full sway.

Union Leagues, whose members were mainly negroes, and the lowest element of whites, were

hotbeds for engendering race strife, and negro equality and plans to place the "black heels on the white necks." Orders from the Freedman's Bureaus were carried out by negro militia. In addition, there were the home Yankees, despicable traitors to the South, who were ready for any deed, no matter how dark, to curry favor with those in power. The white men of the South were not allowed to vote or carry firearms, and no indignity was too great to be offered them, or their families.

The negro considered freedom synonymous with equality, and his greatest ambition was to marry a white wife. Under such conditions the negro clothed with all authority and outnumbering the white, two to one, open resistance would have meant instant death, or being sent to some Northern dungeon, there to languish and die, leaving loved ones exposed to dangers too terrible to contemplate, at the hands of these brutish despots. Under such conditions there was only one recourse left, to organize a powerful Secret Order to accomplish what could not be done in the open. So the Confederate soldiers, as members of the Ku Klux Klan, and fully equal to any emergency, came again to the rescue, and delivered the South from a bondage worse than death.

CHAPTER II.

WHERE FIRST ORGANIZED.

THE Ku Klux Klan had its birth in the town of Pulaski, Giles County, Tennessee, during the winter of 1865-'66. There were six charter members, all having honorable records as Confederate soldiers. The word Ku Klux was really coined by them, being formed from the Greek word, "Kuklos," meaning a circle. They added Klan, which made the name at once unique, mysterious, and fascinating.

Pulaski, the birthplace of the organization, is the county seat of Giles County, a town of importance, of culture and refinement, and at that time had a population of 3,000 or more. It was a town of churches, schools and colleges and not a community that would have produced desperadoes and cut-throats. It is well to note that the very conception of the Ku Klux Klan was amid influences elevating and refining, and its charter members were gentlemen of education and refined tastes, and could not have conceived the organization of an order that

had for its objects low purposes or brutal usages. Pulaski always, in a way, remained headquarters for the Klan, as many of the officers lived there, and the town was proud of being the birthplace of this great organization, which was destined to play such an important part in the history of the Reconstruction period, 1865 to 1870.

The superstition of the negro is well known, and through this element in his makeup, the Ku Klux gained control. They made the negroes believe that they were the ghosts of their dead masters, and under the conviction that if they did wrong, spirits from the other world would visit them; the negroes became very quiet and subdued.

The Klan spread rapidly, and in a year had reached such large numbers, it was found necessary to have some one of experience and influence to become the leader. So General Nathan Bedford Forrest, the distinguished cavalry leader of the Confederacy, was chosen. He took the oath in Room No. 10 of the Maxwell House, Nashville, Tennessee, in the fall of 1866, almost a year after the organization of the Klan, and was made Grand Wizard of the Invisible Empire. General George W. Gordon prepared the oath and ritual for the Klan.

CHAPTER III.

ORIGINAL LETTERS FROM THE LAST TWO SURVIVING CHARTER MEMBERS OF THE KU KLUX KLAN.

Sheffield, Ala., Oct. 25, 1908.

Mrs. Laura Martin Rose,

My Dear Madam: Your letter in regard to the origin and object of the Ku Klux Klan was received in due time. It affords me pleasure to comply with your request. I am glad to see the U. D. C. taking so much interest in getting a correct history of the eventful days of '61 to '65. You would, no doubt, be surprised to know the number of letters I receive from various parts of our country in regard to the Ku Klux Klan. The order was organized in Pulaski, Tennessee, in the winter of 1865 and '66, in the office of Major Thomas M. Jones, by the following named men, all of whom had honorable records as Confederate soldiers: Richard R. Reed, John B. Kennedy, John C. Lester, Frank O. McCord, Calvin Jones and James R. Crowe.

Frank O. McCord was the first Grand Cyclops; I



MAJOR JAMES R. CROWE.

Major James R. Crowe, one of the last two surviving charter members of the Ku Klux Klan, who died at Sheffield, Ala., July 14, 1911.

was the next officer in rank, which was Grand Turk. We held several meetings at the office of Judge Jones; then we held several meetings at the home of your grandfather, Mr. Thomas Martin. Afterwards, our regular den was made in the old residence of Dr. Benjamin Carter. The house had been wrecked by a tornado, only one room left, and that was hidden by the debris of the large building. The house was supposed to be haunted, this served our purposes well, as we played upon the superstitious, and made them believe we were the spirits of dead Confederates. The word Ku Klux was coined by us. We chose the Greek word for circle, "Kuklos," as the name of our circle and afterwards called it Ku Klux, then added Klan and made it from that day historical. The younger generation will never fully realize the risk we ran, and the sacrifices we made to free our beloved Southland from the hated rule of the "Carpet-bagger," the worse negro and the home Yankee. Thank God, our work was rewarded by complete success. After the order grew to large numbers, we found it was necessary to have someone of large experience to command.

We chose General N. B. Forrest, who had joined

our number. He was made a member and took the oath in the Room No. 10 of the Maxwell House at Nashville, Tennessee, in the fall of 1866, nearly a year after we organized at Pulaski. The oath was administered to him by Captain John W. Morton, afterwards Secretary of State, Nashville, Tennessee. There is only one besides myself of the original six who organized the Ku Klux Klan, Mr. John B. Kennedy, of Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. If you will write to him he could give you more information.

Trusting the sketch I have given you will help you in your work,

I am, sincerely, your friend,

JAMES R. CROWE.

Lawrenceburg, Tenn., March 15, 1909.

Mrs. S. E. F. Rose.

Dear Madam: Your kind letter reached me yesterday, and I hasten to reply, for we old Ku Klux appreciate any interest manifested in our order. The Ku Klux Klans were composed of the very best citizens of our country; their mission was to protect the weak and oppressed during the dark days of Reconstruction. To protect the women of the South, who were the loveliest, most noble and



MR. JOHN BOOKER KENNEDY.

Mr. John Booker Kennedy, one of the last two surviving charter members of the Ku Klux Klan, who died at Lawrenceburg, Tenn., February 13, 1913.

best women in the world. The survivors are old men now, old with their memories of other days long past, to cheer them during life's twilight. They are proud they were Ku Klux, and could give aid to these dear Southern women again during the Reconstruction period, for it was a dark and distressing era in our beloved Southland. We did nothing to make us ashamed; our acts were always for the good of our country and those we loved. After the lapse of all these years, the survivors of the Ku Klux Klan are gratified to hear the verdict of many who say to us, "Well done; you undoubtedly saved the beautiful Southland during the Reconstruction era."

It is pleasing to us, for we did our duty as we saw it then; we are grateful for the kind appreciation and interest of our people now. Pardon me for speaking once again of the dear Southern women, the heroines, who so bravely bore the heavy burdens and hardships of those long years of war. The world has never known lovelier, braver women than they were. They were ministering angels to the soldiers. They were our inspiration, and will live in our hearts forever. Their memory is a sweet benediction to our lives as we near the last river. We would say to younger women, teach

your children to love and honor the memory of those noble women of the South, the women of the '60's.

Wishing you much success in securing facts and truths for your history, I am willing to give you any information possible.

Yours truly,

JOHN B. KENNEDY.

Note:—The original letters, as per the above, are the valued possessions of the author of this book:

These letters from the pens of those charter members of the Ku Klux Klan, Major James R. Crowe and Mr. John B. Kennedy, contain the truth of history, and nothing could prove more interesting, or more valuable in order to preserve the facts for future generations than these records from the pens of the last two surviving charter members of that mysterious brotherhood of men known as the Ku Klux Klan.

Since these letters were written, both of these noble men, who served their country well, both in war and in peace, have crossed over the river of death, and their lips are now forever sealed, and these written words from them leave a record, deeply significant, and of priceless value.



HOME OF MR. THOMAS MARTIN, PULASKI, TENNESSEE,

where the or
bearing the cross mark was the room where the Ku Klux assembled.

NOTE—Mr. Martin, the author of this book, is the granddaughter of Mr. Thomas Martin.

CHAPTER IV.

MEMBERS AND OBJECTS OF THE KLAN.

IT is for the sake of the home that almost all things are wrought and achieved. It was the home instinct that prompted the valiant Virginians, the persistent Puritans, and the determined Dutch to dare the waves of an unknown and uncharted sea, and come to America, where they hoped to find an opportunity for the establishment of that for which their hearts yearned, a home. Upon these sacred principles, love and protection of home, was founded the Ku Klux Klan; and no organization ever held loftier ideas or nobler purposes. It was composed of the soldiers of the Confederacy, who, for four years, had thrilled the world with their deeds of courage and valor, and returning to their desolated homes, were forced to confront the war penalty imposed upon the States of the Confederacy, slave confiscation and Reconstruction under African rule.

At first this circle was formed for social pleasure and recreation, and on discovering that the queer

costumes, the great secrecy and weird mystery operated on the minds of the ignorant and vicious negroes and undesirable whites, they turned their objects into more useful channels. The element of superstition in the negro, and the bold villainy of the depraved white man were appealed to, and the one was scared nearly to death, while the other gradually disappeared. The Ku Klux knew the character of the whites and blacks with whom they had to deal, and with each they used the needed treatment. Initiation into this order is said to have tried the souls of men, and tested their courage as no other secret order, before or since, has done. They bound themselves to allegiance to the laws of the United States. The question then arises, Why a secret organization? Because ex-Confederates were denied the right of ballot, the right to testify in the courts or to carry firearms. There were negro soldiers, legislators and magistrates, and as negroes held all offices, the white men were completely at their mercy, and they could tie them up by their thumbs whenever they chose. The only thing to do in order to preserve some form of just government and have some degree of freedom was to organize a compact secret body to do what openly they could not do.

It is not to be inferred because the Ku Klux operated under the cover of darkness and disguise, that they were cowards, for their courage was of the highest order. But with the South disarmed, and under Carpet-Bag rule, to have acted in the open, would have been equivalent to offering their wrists for handcuffs, and being sent to some Northern prison by the United States Marshal, there to slowly die of starvation or torture, thus leaving the women and children in the South to be subjected to insults from negroes and scalawags, with no one to defend them.

The Ku Klux were opposed to the shedding of human blood, and violence was never used except as a last resort. Repeated warnings were given to offenders, and it was only when they were not heeded, that the Ku Klux resorted to extreme measures.

It has been said that the methods of the Night Riders are similar to those of the Ku Klux Klan, but never was anything more erroneous. There is no similarity except, perhaps, the secrecy, the moving at night and the masked figures, and there it ends. The methods of the Ku Klux Klan were generally peaceful and without undue destruction

to life and property, and when its objects had been accomplished, there was no persecution, nor pillaging, nor hounding of anyone. And when tranquility was restored to the land, the Klan "folded their tents like the Arabs, and as silently stole away."

It is true that some negroes were killed by the Ku Klux, but in every instance, it was because they offered violent resistance. The Ku Klux would visit a negro who had been guilty of wrong doing, and who had been repeatedly warned to conduct himself in the proper manner, they would carry him out to give him a severe whipping as a punishment, and in order to scare him into behaving himself, and the negro would make an attack on the Ku Klux, who were then forced to kill him in self-defense. The truth about it would never be known, and the report would go out that the Ku Klux had murdered a negro in cold blood, the true facts in the case always being suppressed. As on the frontier, many crimes were charged to the Indians, which were really committed by some mean white men, so the Ku Klux got credit for many things they did not do, and motives they never entertained.

The following incident shows how the Ku Klux were feared, not only by the negroes, but Scala-

wags and Carpet-baggers, as well. Down in Mississippi, during the high tide of Reconstruction, a Carpet-bag Justice of the Peace was trying a white man for assaulting a negro. One of the Ku Klux leaders of that State walked into court, and placed a pistol on the table in front of him, and moved, "that the court adjourn." It immediately did adjourn, and that Justice never held court again, although he remained in office more than a year longer.

CHAPTER V.

CARPET-BAGGERS—SCALAWAGS—AND NEGROES.

THESE were the parties with whom the Ku Klux had to deal. The first were Radicals from the North who came South at the close of the war between the States, hoping to hold the reins of government. As they were backed up by all the power of the North, they had authority to do whatever they saw fit. No measures were too atrocious, no humiliation too great to be offered to the people of the South by these Carpet-baggers. The second were the Scalawags—also called in derision, the Home-Yankees.

The Scalawags were of all men most detested. They were native born whites, miserable traitors to the South, and playing for favor with the successful side. They preached equality to the negroes, telling them that, "They were just as good, if not a little better, than the whites." They would march the negroes to the polls and make them vote, under a banner inscribed, "Down with Democracy."

There might be some excuse for the negro, ignorant, his freedom suddenly thrust upon him, and crazed by a sudden elevation to power, but for these depraved whites, who proved that a white skin does not always mean a white man, there was no possible excuse. They made themselves the lowest of the low, and deserving of the contempt in which they were held by all, even the negroes themselves.

It is impossible to portray in language how these Scalawags were detested, despised and ostracized. The great Irish orator and patriot, Emmett, once declared—"That the meanest of all mean things is an anti-Irish Irishman." If he had lived in the South during Reconstruction, he would have said, "That the meanest of all mean things is an anti-Southern Southerner."

These two classes of negro leaders, the Scalawags and Carpet-baggers, were the instigators of all the trouble in the South, the negroes being used by them simply as a means to an end, viz: to control their votes, and handle the reins of government for their own nefarious schemes. As to the third class mentioned in the heading, the negroes, many of them proved most faithful. Some followed their masters to the war, others remained with "ole

Mistis and de Chillun," looking after their wants and protecting them by every means in their power. Even after the war, many negroes declined to accept their freedom, seeming to regard it as something thrust upon them which they neither appreciated nor desired, and preferred to remain with "their white folks." Even the promise of "Forty acres and a mule" held out to them by the Federals had no attraction for them, and they longed for the "good ole days befo de war," when "Ole Massa and ole Missis" looked after all their bodily and spiritual needs. These faithful negroes were called "Old Confeds," a title of honor so they considered it, and they were shown all consideration which their faithfulness deserved. If all the negroes had been like these, the horrors of Reconstruction would have been averted. However, the majority of the negroes, ignorant and credulous, dazed by the emoluments of office and rich rewards offered them became tools in the hands of unscrupulous Scalawags and office seekers.

The negro population was largely illiterate, and most of the negroes holding office during Reconstruction could neither read nor write, and yet they sat upon the petit and grand juries, were elected

magistrates and constables when they did not know even the meaning of the words. As members of the Legislatures, many of the negroes could only sign their pay rolls by means of signs and marks. This was the galling yoke that was to be thrust upon the necks of the white men of the South, in whose veins coursed the purest and best blood of the ages. Relief from this desperate and humiliating condition came through the Ku Klux Klan and the South was redeemed from Carpet-Bag, Scalawag and Negro rule.

CHAPTER VI.

REAL AND BOGUS KLANS.

MANY outrages were committed in the name of the Ku Klux, by parties who did not belong to the Klan; reckless firebrands, with private hatreds to appease, and having the audacity to call themselves Ku Klux. Thus the impression was made that the Ku Klux were a set of vicious men with no regard for law and order; but these outrages were committed by bands of thieving Scalawags, who used the name as a cloak for their evil deeds. No genuine Ku Klux would have been guilty of a deed or an act that would bring the blush of shame to any brave or honorable man. They belonged to the best class of citizens, once soldiers of the Confederacy, who had only the best interests of society in view, and would scorn to do a mean or cowardly act. Nothing in connection with the war, or rather the period at the close of the war, known as Reconstruction Days, is of greater interest than the Ku Klux Klan. Its mystery was so fascinating, that

stories of this great organization were always listened to with eagerness and delight.

Those delightful books, "The Clansman," and its sequel, "The Traitor," given us by Thomas J. Dixon, have a most intense and thrilling interest. "The Clansman," places before us the real Klan, with its high and noble purposes, and shows the great good accomplished by them, while "The Traitor," in striking contrast, shows the bogus Klan and its many evil deeds, which inspired such a reign of terror.

The white robes of the original Klan, and the red robes of the spurious Klan leave a deep, vivid and lasting impression. The colors were deeply significant. White, the symbol of purity, was most appropriate for the real Klan, organized to protect the homes and liberties of the South, while red, always the badge of bloodshed, anarchy and disorder, was most fitting for the bogus Klan, whose deeds were disgraceful and villainous.

Be it said in justice to the real Ku Klux, that whenever the perpetrators of these villainous deeds were stripped of their disguise, it was found that they were not members of the Ku Klux Klan.

So as a matter of justice and right, it is of the

greatest importance to draw a strong line of demarkation between real and bogus Klans. If the author of this book had been given the privilege of selecting an appropriate emblem and motto for the real Ku Klux Klan, she would have chosen, "a shield on which was a wreath of oak leaves and in the center a white lily," the oak leaves representing strength, and the lily, purity, typical of the strength of the organization, and the purity of its motives. And for the motto, "Virtus incendit Vires" —"Virtue kindles the strength."

CHAPTER VII.

DEPARTMENTS AND OFFICERS.

THE peculiar fascination ever attendant upon things mysterious, was always present with everything connected with the Ku Klux Klan. The Invisible Empire, as the territory under the control of the Klan, was called, extended from Virginia to Texas and embraced about fourteen States. The Empire was subdivided into Realms; Realms into Dominions; Dominions into Provinces; and Provinces into Dens; corresponding respectively to States, Congressional Districts, Counties and Towns. Each department had its head officer, their duties being definitely designated, except those of the Grand Wizard, the supreme officer, whose control was absolute.

The following is a list of officers and their departments in regular order: The Grand Wizard of the Invisible Empire, assisted by his ten Genii; the Grand Dragon of the Realm and his eight Hydras; the Grand Titan of the Dominion and his six Furies; the Grand Giant of the Province and his

four Goblins; the Grand Cyclops of the Den and his two Night Hawks. A Grand Turk, Grand Monk, Grand Exchequer, Grand Scribe, and Grand Sentinel were officers in the local Dens. The Genii, Hydras, Furies, Goblins, Night Hawks were staff officers, and the private members were called Ghouls.

The Dens, or places of rendezvous of the Ku Klux, were generally in obscure places, in the thick weeds, in caves, or delapidated buildings, devastated by time or storms, and given over to bats and owls. Their appearance was always so sudden, that they seemed to have risen from the ground, and their disappearance being equally sudden, the impression was left that the earth had opened and swallowed them up. These mysterious maneuvers were all conjured up in the brain of the Ku Klux and the weird and ghostly, the mysterious and unearthly, always predominated.



KU KLUX KLAN BANNER.*

*The above is an exact duplicate of the banner used by the Ku Klux, made by directions in book entitled "Ku Klux Klan," by Prof. Walter L. Fleming.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BANNER OF THE KU KLUX.

DIRECTIONS for making the Ku Klux Banner was as follows:

“The Grand Ensign or Banner of the Ku Klux shall be in the form of an isosceles triangle, five feet long and three feet wide at the staff. The material shall be yellow, with a red scalloped border, about three inches in width. There shall be painted upon it in black, a Dracovolans, or Flying Dragon, with the following motto inscribed on it:

“ ‘Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus,’ ”

“ ‘What always, what everywhere, what by all, is held to be true.’ ”

(1) From Prof. Walter L. Fleming's Book, "Ku Klux Klan," page 147.

CHAPTER IX.

CONSTITUTION.

THE Ku Klux was distinctly a protective organization. The character and objects of the order are set forth in their prescript, adopted at a convention of the order held at Nashville, in April, 1867, as follows:

“This is an institution of Chivalry, Humanity, Mercy, and Patriotism: embodying in its genius and principles all that is chivalric in conduct, noble in sentiment, generous in manhood, and patriotic in purpose; its peculiar objects being: First—To protect the weak, the innocent, and the defenseless, from the indignities, wrongs and outrages, of the lawless, the violent and the brutal, to relieve the injured and oppressed, to succor the suffering and unfortunate, especially the widows and orphans of Confederate soldiers. Second—To protect and defend the Constitution of the United States, and all laws passed in conformity thereto, and to protect the States and the people thereof from all invasion from any source whatever. Third—To aid and

assist in the execution of all constitutional laws, and to protect the people from unlawful seizure, and from trial except by their peers in conformity to the laws of the land.”⁽²⁾

CREED.

The Creed of the Ku Klux Klan was as follows:

“We, the Order of the Ku Klux Klan, reverentially acknowledge the majesty and supremacy of the Divine Being, and recognize the goodness and providence of the same. And we recognize our relation to the United States Government, the Supremacy of the Constitution, the Constitutional Laws thereof, and the Union of States thereunder.”⁽³⁾

THE OATH.

I, before the great immaculate God of heaven and earth, do take and subscribe to the following sacred binding oath and obligation:

I promise and swear that I will uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States as it was handed down by our forefathers in its original

(2) From “Ku Klux Klan,” by Prof. Walter L. Fleming, pg. 153.

(3) From “Ku Klux Klan,” by Prof. Walter L. Fleming, pg. 154.

purity. I promise and swear that I will reject and oppose the principles of the Radical Party in all its forms, and forever maintain and contend that intelligent white men shall govern this country.

I promise and pledge myself to assist, according to my pecuniary circumstances, all brothers in distress.

Females, widows, and their households, shall ever be specially in my care and protection. I promise and swear that I will obey all instructions given me by my chief, and should I ever divulge or cause to be divulged any secrets, signs or passwords of the Invisible Empire, I must meet with the fearful and just penalty of the traitor, which is death, death, death, at the hands of my brethren.⁽¹⁾

(1) The above, is one of three versions of the Oath of the Ku Klux Klan as given in Prof. Fleming's Book, pg. 197. They are all similar, but given from memory, as it is stated that the Oath was never printed. This version was from KU KLUX report, North Carolina Testimony. Court Proceedings, pg. 422.



COSTUMES WORN IN TENNESSEE AND NORTH
ALABAMA.*

* Used by permission of Prof. Walter L. Fleming; appears in his book, entitled "KU KLUX KLAN."

CHAPTER X.

COSTUMES AND PARADES.

THE fantastic costumes were intended to work upon the superstitious fears of the negroes.

No special instructions were given as to the color or makeup of these costumes, and each Ku Klux could give full play to his fancy in this regard, their aim being always to make them as grotesque as possible, so the costumes varied in different Klans. However, the robes always covered the entire body, and sometimes consisted merely of a sheet, but white was always the favorite color, as it carried out the idea that the Ku Klux were ghosts or spirits. The horses were also covered with a mantle, usually of white. A cross of fiery red cloth stitched across the breast, a mask of white cloth, a high conical hat, formed the garb of a typical Ku Klux, and when mounted on a white steed, the vision was complete. Of course, beneath these robes they carried pistols strapped to their waists, and a favorite device to

scare the negroes, was to wear false heads and hands.

In this instance, the robe would be pulled up over their own heads, and the false skull placed on top, and when asking the negro for a drink of water the Ku Klux would say, "Here Sambo, hold my head while I drink this water." On being handed the skull the negro would scream, and take to the woods, thoroughly convinced that he had seen the ghost of his dead master. When the false hand was used, the Ku Klux would proffer to shake hands, leaving the false hand with the negro as a souvenir to carry terror to his soul.

These costumes were all made by the women of the South, those noble women, who in the war between the States, with their own fingers made the uniforms and knitted the socks for the Confederate soldiers, counting no sacrifice too great for these Southern heroes, so now they were ever ready to aid the Ku Klux in the efforts they were putting forth for their protection. A note to mother, wife, sister, sweetheart, for Ku Klux robes always met with a prompt response.

There being no special uniform adopted by the Ku Klux accounts for the many different colors

used. In some States white was used, and in others red and also black, likewise any disguise was permissible, and down in Mississippi, one of the Grand Cyclops used a long white cow's tail for beard, and some of the boys called him "Old Grandpa Thunder."

A TYPICAL ORDER FOR KU KLUX ROBES.

Headquarters, K. K. K.

"Anno Domini, 1868.

Misses X and Y: Knowing you to be friends of the Ku Klux Klan, the Grand Cyclops takes the privilege of requesting you to make a couple of robes for some of his poor, needy followers, and if you will be so kind as to make them the protecting eye of the G. G. Cyclops will ever rest upon you. Thinking that you will make them, the following are the directions:

Make two robes reaching to the ground, open in front, bordered with white three inches wide, white cuffs and collars, half moons on the left breast with stars in the center of each moon, and caps of a conical shape twelve inches high with a tassel, with white cloth hanging over the face so as to conceal it, and behind so as to hide the back of the head.

Make the first of the caps red, the second and third white, and the rest red. By order of G. G. Cyclops.

ABEL HAASSAANAN, G. Scribe.

The Grand Turk will be after them on the night of the 15th, at 10 o'clock.

You are requested to burn this after reading."⁽¹⁾

PARADES.

The Ku Klux had frequent parades, every detail being arranged so as to mystify and strike terror to the hearts of the bystanders. The first parade given in Pulaski, Tennessee, was on the night of the 4th of July, 1867; notices were scattered broadcast over the town and country and placed on trees and fences and on the backs of hogs and cows, and by nightfall the streets were lined with people, wondering and fearing.

The Ku Klux assembled in groups at the various roads leading into the town, donned their costumes quickly, which they had concealed under their coats, covered their horses with white or variegated colored mantles, blew their shrill whistles used as

(1) Clipping from Nashville Banner.

a signal to start, and then slowly and silently they marched and countermarched through the streets of the town, thus leaving the impression of great numbers while in reality there were only a very few. This parade, which lasted for hours, made a great sensation. Not a word was spoken, and then at a signal from the leader, they quietly and secretly dispersed; their exit being as mystifying as their sudden appearance. The negroes were confirmed in their belief that they had seen the ghosts or departed spirits of their former "Ole Marsters," and no one being any the wiser as to who the Ku Klux were, where they came from, or where they went after the parade.

CHAPTER XI.

NOTICES AND WARNINGS.

THE Ku Klux Notices and Warnings were in keeping with their mode of carrying on affairs; mysterious and terrifying. Notices of meetings were usually accompanied by a Skull and Cross Bones, thus:

Ku Klux Klan.  Come fully armed!!!

Be at the Cemetery at 9 o'clock to-night!!!!

And warnings to offenders by a picture of a figure dangling from the limb of a tree, a coffin, or some gruesome emblem with a call to the negroes and Scalawags, "TO BEWARE."

KU KLUX.

Serpent's Den—Death's Retreat.
Hollow Tomb—Misery Cave of the
Great Ku Klux Klan, No. 1,000.
Windy Month—Bloody Moon,
Muddy Night—Twelfth Hour.

General Orders No. 1.

Make ready! Make ready! Make ready!

The mighty Hobgoblins of the Confederate Dead
in a Hell a Bulloo assembled!

Revenge, Revenge!

Be secret, be cautious, be terrible!

By special grant, Hell freezes over for your pas-
sage. Offended ghosts, put on your skates, and
cross over to mother earth!

Work! Work! Work!

Double, double, toil and trouble;

Fire burn and cauldron bubble.

Ye, white men who stick to black beasts!

The time arrives for you to part. Q. W. X. W.
V. U. and so from Omega to Alpha.

Cool it with a baboon's blood

Then the charm is firm and good.

Ye niggers who stick to low whites!

Begone, Begone, Begone! The world turns
around,—the thirteenth hour approacheth.

S, one, two and three—Beware! White and Yel-
low.

J, and T——P——and L—— begone.—The
handwriting on the wall warns you!

From the murderer's gibbet, throw
Into flame come high and low.

By order of the Great

Blufustin,

G. S. K. K. K.⁽¹⁾

A true copy,

Peterloo

P. S. K. K. K.

(1) The above appears in Prof. Fleming's Book, "Ku Klux Klan," pg. 190, with other General Orders of the Ku Klux and a note states that they were by Ryland Randolph, and printed in his paper, "The Independent Monitor," of Tuscaloosa, Alabama.

CHAPTER XII.

LESSONS TAUGHT BY THE KLAN.

MANY instances could be related of the good done by the Ku Klux, for, in every instance, they protected the just rights of the negro as well as the whites, and they stood always for the protection of the menaced life, liberty, and property, of all innocent men. The record of the Ku Klux Klan teaches forcibly three lessons, which are so plain that he who runs may read. First, the inevitability of Anglo-Saxon Supremacy; when harassed by bands of outlaws, thugs, carpet-baggers, and guerillas, turned loose on the South and upheld by political machinery, during the Reconstruction period, the sturdy white men of the South, against all odds, maintained white supremacy and secured Caucasian civilization, when its very foundations were threatened within and without. Second, a new revelation of the greatness and genius of General Nathan Bedford Forrest, the "Wizard of the Saddle," the great Confederate cavalry leader. As Grand Wizard of the Invisible Empire, to his splen-

did leadership was due, more than to any other thing, the successful carrying out of the high and noble purposes of the real Ku Klux Klan.

Third, the grandeur of the character of the "Men who wore the Gray," the Confederate soldiers, the real Ku Klux. They were not only great in war, but great in peace, and great in the performance of every Duty, which Robert E. Lee, the mightiest military chieftain the world ever saw, pronounced, "The sublimest word in the English language."



"OLE BLACK MAMMY."

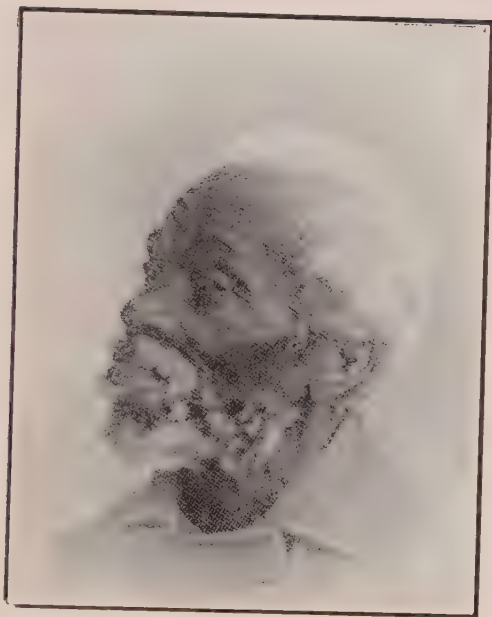
CHAPTER XIII.

KU KLUX STORIES.

HOW delightful and enchanting were the tales of the Ku Klux, as told by some old black negro Mammy, before a blazing wood fire, and told in a sepulchral whisper, that made the cold chills play up and down the back, and the marrow almost freeze in one's bones. She would tell you, "These silent riders were sixteen feet tall, with fiery eyes, and unquenchable thirst, never being satisfied with less than two buckets of water for a drink, and, "honey-chile, dey wuz de awfulles' sight you ever seed in yo' life; and, honey-lam', be good if you don't the Ku Klux will git you." The grotesque costumes, masks, high, conical hats, robes all of white, with red crosses on their breasts, and seen at the dead hour of midnight, were enough to frighten anyone, white or black; and the darkies just declared, "Fore Gawd," the Ku Klux came straight from the bad place. "Old Uncle Wash," always interesting in his stories in the Taylor-Trot-

wood Magazine, gives in one issue the story of his first vision of the Ku Klux.

“De niggers wuz all down to the meetin’ house, holdin’ one of dese heah distracted meetin’s. De moon wuz ashinin’, when we seed fru de church winders some ghost-men on some ghost-hosses comin’ outen de woods, one behind de yudder. Dey come slow an’ solum-like, an’ dat night I seed my fust Ku Klux, an’ ebery nigger dar seed um, too, an’ dey nebber will forgit um. Dem black niggers wuz skeered so bad dat night, dey skin turned white, an’ de kinks all come outen dey har. Den de leader, he rid up to de church do’ an’ de niggers all said, ‘Hit’s de angel on de fiery steed,’ but I said, ‘No, hit’s Ole Massa dat wuz kilt in de war.’ Den de ghost-man, in a low, deep voice, an’ pintin’ wid his long, bony finger at de watah-bucket, said, ‘A drink, please, I haint had no watah since I was kilt in de fust battle of Manassas.’ ‘Gawd, I sed so, hit’s Ole Marster done riz from the de grave. Niggers, quit yo’ lyin’ an’ yo’ meanness, an’ prepare to meet yo’ Gawd.’ ”



"OLD UNCLE WASH."

CHAPTER XIV.

PEN PICTURE OF A KU KLUX ESCAPADE.

January 28, 1911.

Mrs. S. E. F. Rose,
West Point, Miss.

My Dear Mrs. Rose: I was truly glad to receive a copy of your truthful history, of the Ku Klux Klan. I had to laugh at "Ole Wash's" exclamations, as he caught his first glimpse of the Genii, and the Ghouls.

It called up to my memory's vision a scene that I was a participant in, soon after our den was formed. It was in the northwest corner of Hinds, and southwest corner of Madison Counties, on Big Black River, joining Yazoo County. Seven of us had rubber suits made, just the shape of men, pliant and strong. Each rubber would hold thirteen buckets (the old fashion wooden kind) of water. These rubber, man-shaped bags were lightly strapped to our bodies, and rested in front of us, on our saddles. At the pedal extremities were faucets, by which we could turn the water out, as soon as we

had filled them. Just under our chins, was a tolerable stiff funnel, that served as a head, of our rubber man bag. There were several small tubes in this funnel that permitted the air to escape, as we seemingly drank from the buckets of water offered. The air escaping from these tubes would sound exactly like the steam escaping from an over-heated boiler, and could be heard for a hundred feet or more.

We had true and tried negroes, who had been with us, and ministered to our wants, faithful as Newfoundland dogs to their trusts. These negroes were our spies. They would tell us where the negroes, Scalawags, and Carpet-baggers, were going to hold their meetings, and "Pow Wows," as they were called. Upon the night the meeting took place, we would be there.

I will give you a pen picture of one of our escapades. The meeting was in Colonel John W. Robinson's quarter lot, near where Robinson's well is now located, in Madison County, Mississippi. It was a beautiful, clear, bright night; the autumn moon was at her full. Seven of us, fully rigged, in all our weird regalia, rode in single file about one hundred yards apart. We used the cry of night-

birds, or animals for our signals in approaching the camp, or meeting place, of the enemy. This particular night I was in front and rode right up to the well at the south end of the quarter lot. The well was about 100 feet deep. Two buckets were used in drawing the water: one at each end of the rope running over a pulley, just over the center of the well.

Two trap doors covered the well, and as the bucket coming up full of water would strike these trap doors, they were lifted by the bucket ascending; and as soon as the bucket was clear of them, they would drop back and close the well; and the bucket lowered back, upon them, and the full bucket emptied. As I rode up there were about one hundred negroes around this well, and in the quarters were several thousand negroes, yanks, and scallwags.

The negroes were laughing, and making a noise, that could be easily heard half a mile away. When I came in sight, there was dead silence around the well. I rode straight up; an old white haired negro had just drawn a bucket and it rested on the covering of the well. In a deep, sepulchral tone, I said, "Uncle Tom, give me a drink of water, I have not

had one since the first battle of Manassas." He poured the water into a bucket, and handed it up; and down I poured it into my seemingly open mouth. The escaping air sounded like steam escaping from a surcharged boiler. I called for another, and another, until I had disposed of my thirteen buckets. The eyes of the negroes in that crowd were stretched in abject terror; and they were as dumb as oysters. I repeated my dringing feat at the other well, at the north end of the quarter lot; and my place was taken at the south well by another of the Ghouls, until seven of us had received twenty-six buckets each.

For long years afterwards, after nightfall, not a negro could be induced to go to one of these wells that we had visited; and before the last one of us on one of these night rides had been watered, not a white man or negro, who did not live in these quarters, could be found within a mile of them. Such a stampede as would take place, beggars my powers of description. The farther they got from the scene, the greater became their fears; and the more rapid their flight; for distance, in reality, seemed to lend enchantment to their view.

We could rest assured, that there would never be

another "Pow Wow," in any quarter lot, church, or gathering place, that the Ku Klux Klan had paid a visit.

Very respectfully, and truly yours,

LAMAR FONTAINE,

Lyon, Mississippi.

CHAPTER XV.

"A MESSENGER OF THE KU KLUX KLAN."

THE incident related below illustrates a feature in regard to the Ku Klux Klan that is not generally known, that is, that messengers were sent from one Klan to another, keeping the Klans in close communication. There was at all times perfect co-operation between the various Klans, and it was sometimes necessary to get assistance from a Klan at a distance, so as to protect those in the neighborhood who were Ku Klux, so messengers were sent. This was considered a post of great honor, as only those of unquestioned bravery were chosen, but the honor was attended by grave dangers. In the following article, Dr. C. Kendrick, of Alcorn County, Mississippi, was the messenger described therein, and it was written by him some years ago, and published in "The Herald," of Corinth, Mississippi, over the Nom de plume, "Elsie Vane." It possesses great historical interest, and this copy was given to the author by Dr. Kendrick for publication in this book.

“It was in the sad and awful days of Reconstruction, on a warm afternoon, in the month of June, in the State of Mississippi. A solitary horseman was slowly galloping along the road, the sun was fast sinking below the western horizon and the shadows were growing long across the lane. The sweet little song-birds had ceased to sing, and had gone to roost on the branches of the forest trees. Not far away an owl hooted, possibly signaling to his mate, possibly rejoicing in the hope that he would soon make a meal off some of the birds so numerous about him. The horse was almost white, but had a dark mane and tail, and he showed by his gait that he had traveled far and was very tired. The messenger was a young man, whose face was almost girlish. It was evident that he was too young to have been a soldier in the great war, the memory of which was fresh and burning in the hearts and minds of all Southerners. There was nothing peculiar about his dress, and he might have been taken for a farmer boy or a student “just let loose from school.” But a student of physiognomy might have seen written in his face and in his eyes, a purpose, and a will to execute that purpose. In front of him lying

across his saddle was a short-light double-barrel shotgun, in his belt was a pistol of heavy calibre, which had done service in the great war. Doubtless the young man had read how Colonel R. J. Harding (who was the first man to grasp the bridle of General Lee's horse at the Battle of the Wilderness, when the soldiers shouted, "Lee to the rear") had saved his own life by means of a concealed deadly deringer when he was captured and about to be murdered by two of his enemies. Perhaps he had read how Major Lamar Fontaine and other great soldiers had secured freedom by concealed small weapons, for deftly concealed about his person was a small, but deadly, revolver, which he thought he might sometime have occasion to use.

He had under him a pair of large leather saddle bags, which seemed well filled. As night drew on he began to look carefully at the thickets on the road side, presently he looked searchingly behind him and entered the jungle. The horse which entered the jungle was white, almost white, but not perfectly so; the horse which came from it looked entirely white, but a close inspection showed that it was covered with white canvas, from head to heels. The horseman was the same who had a

few moments before entered the jungle, but wonderfully changed in appearance. He seemed much larger and taller and was dressed in a robe of red, with a snow-white border, while on top of his head-dress was a star, and his eyes and mouth might have been taken for those of a master mechanic of the Dark Regions. The same gun lay in front of him which we saw a few moments before, but he held it in a different manner. It was not lying loosely and carelessly in front of him as before, but two fingers of the right hand rested on the triggers and the thumb was ready to draw back the hammers in a trice if it seemed necessary. The sun had set, the large stars had begun to twinkle, and the young moon, almost at its first quarter was beginning to shine overhead.

Doubtless the young man remembered a shot from ambush, which sent a deadly missile dangerously near him only a few days before, and he wished to be ready for such an emergency in the future. We may imagine the thoughts of the young man while he was riding along the lonely road, knowing not when a concealed enemy might shoot from ambush. He remembered how, during the great war, his widowed mother had been abused,

threatened and robbed of valuable jewelry worn on her person, while the fiend held a cocked pistol almost touching her throat. His father, on his death-bed, left a beautiful watch to his only sister, then only five years old, which his mother wore continually around her neck. He also remembered how his dead father's portrait had been stabbed and cut with a dagger. He knew these men were not the brave men from the Northern States, who were honestly fighting for what they believed to be right, but fiends who were too cowardly to attack a live man in the open. He knew that the men who did these deeds, although members of the Union Army, were men of our country, some of them almost neighbors. He felt keenly this degradation and he made a vow that the world was too small for these men and himself if he ever recognized them. Like all other boys, for he was but a boy, his thoughts went out to some girl, somewhere, but with a frown he would put the thought from him as soon and as far as possible, for he had other work before him. He remembered how he and others had vowed to help each other in the work of bringing to justice these fiends, in human shape, who were heaping all kinds of indignities on the helpless women and

children of the South. Thinking of all these things, he grasped his gun closer, and ever and anon he would lay his hand on his large pistol as if to make sure it was in its proper place in his belt, which he wore around his waist. Perhaps half an hour passed after changing his costume when he stopped, looking behind, in front, to the right and to the left. Then raising a small silver whistle, which hung around his neck by a silken cord, to his lips, he blew it quickly, short and sharp, three times, then pausing a moment and repeated the performance. Instantly the signal was answered from the jungle not far away. The young man rode slowly to the place from whence the signal came. Presently a sentinel ordered him to halt, presenting his gun. Then a horseman dressed in robes of red, decorated in white and red, rode forward and asked if he had the countersign. When he approached to receive it the sentinel held his gun in readiness for action should occasion demand it. The countersign was satisfactory, and the horseman said, "Come," and they rode together a little way and entered a small clearing. There, men were assembled, whose ages ranged anywhere from seventeen to sixty-five years.

“From the gray sire, whose trembling hand,
Could hardly buckle on his brand
To the raw boy, whose shaft and bow
Were yet scarce terror to the crow.”

Some were lying on their shawls, some sitting on the ground, some standing and a little beyond the clearing, which was not larger than half an acre, were some twenty-five or thirty horses, and several men guarding them. The stranger stood in the Rendezvous of the Ku Klux Klan. The Grand Cyclops arose from his seat on a stump and asked who he was. The mounted sentinel answered that the stranger was “a messenger with the countersign.” The Grand Cyclops turned to the young man and asked what he desired of them and who he was. He replied that he was Number 89, and that he bore a message from a neighboring Ku Klux Klan. Saying this, he bowed and handed the Grand Cyclops a folded paper. The Grand Cyclops handed the folded paper to the Grand Scribe with one word, “Read.” The Grand Scribe strikes a match, lights a candle, which he always carried, and read the message. It was a request from a Ku Klux Klan ten miles or more away, to come at once and carry out the sentence which their Klan had passed on the perpetrator of an awful crime. The mes-



MISSISSIPPI KU KLUX

(In full uniform.)

The picture on the right (the erect picture with small pistol in the belt) is Dr. Carroll Kendrick, of Alcorn County, Mississippi.

NOTE.—This is said to be the only picture extant, taken from life during the Ku Klux times, and is loaned for use in this book by Dr. Kendrick.

sage stated that proof was positive and the identification complete. The Grand Cyclops placed a silver whistle to his lips, similar to the one carried by the messenger, and gave one long, loud, sharp whistle, and instantly every man arose, went to his horse, and in less than ten minutes every man and every horse was disguised like the messenger and his horse, and they were ready to move. In a few minutes the Grand Cyclops blew a peculiar note on his whistle, and every man rode off. Not a word was spoken, the orders were made with the whistle. Woe to the wretch who had fallen under the condemnation of the Ku Klux Klan!

The messenger proceeds quietly to a neighbor's house, where he spends the night, for he must be able to prove that he was not with the Klan that night, that he was miles away on other business.

We will not follow the Klan. They are on a mission of duty, and a deed of justice is about to be performed. Such acts as this, such deeds of mercy saved the South in her time of sorest need.

Let the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth be told about the Ku Klux Klan, and it will be regarded an honorable organization even by those who now have the worst possible opinion of it. Signed "ELSIE VANE." (By C. Kendrick.)

CHAPTER XVI.

THE END OF RECONSTRUCTION.

THE Reconstruction period was now rapidly approaching its close.

Reconstruction Days, called most appropriately, "Destruction Days," by a prominent Southern writer, formed a dark and distressing era in the history of the South. In the dark clouds that lowered over the Southland during Reconstruction, the Ku Klux Klan made the only rift in the sky, letting in the blessed sunlight of Heaven. In spite of "Force Laws," "Anti-Ku Klux Statutes" and "Militia Laws," the Klan pursued the even tenor of its way, and investigations by Congressional and other committees revealed very little of a tangible nature about the Ku Klux.

The sworn secrecy and binding oath made a bulwark of defense as strong as the rock of Gibraltar. Many of the secrets of the order were locked up in the breasts of the Ku Klux, and died with them. One Southern Governor was impeached for refusing to recognize Writs of Habeas Corpus for al-

leged members of the Ku Klux Klan. However, the very secrecy necessary for the existence of the Klan, made it possible for vicious persons to operate under the disguise of the Ku Klux, to wreak private vengeance and hatreds.

It would be very unjust and unfair to place upon the real Ku Klux the odium of these evil deeds, which were deeply regretted by them, but impossible to control. No unbiased student of history can fail to admit that the conditions of the times called for organized effort, to take offices out of incompetent and mischievous hands, to protect the women of the South from brutal assault, and to maintain the supremacy of the white race.

The conceptions, aims and purposes of the original Ku Klux Klan were born of the loftiest sentiments that can animate the human heart. In the course of events, the days of Reconstruction were destined to end, the Ku Klux Klan had accomplished a great work, its mission was ended, and the time for disbandment had come.

So, following the command of their leader, this great organization was soon to be no more, and the Ku Klux then would renew their efforts to repair the waste places, and to upbuild their homes made

desolate by the war between the States, and Days of Reconstruction covering a period of nearly ten long years. How well they succeeded, making the South rise "Phoenix-like from her ashes, and blossom as the rose," subsequent history has fully recorded.

The Ku Klux Klan is part of the South's history, and no record could be complete that failed to include the history of this truly wonderful organization.

CHAPTER XVII.

DISBANDMENT.

IN February, 1869, General Nathan Bedford Forrest, Grand Wizard of the Invisible Empire, issued a Proclamation to his subjects to disband; and this strange and mysterious order having accomplished its great mission, in relieving the South from the galling yoke of Carpet-Bag rule, passed out of existence forever. The order for disbandment included instructions to burn all regalia and paraphernalia, banners, etc. The disbandment has been thus described:

“In Nashville, just before disbandment, the Clansman, in full Ku Klux regalia, paraded through the streets, and although the Capitol was in charge of three thousand Reconstruction Militia, and two hundred police, who were sworn to take every Ku Klux dead or alive, the boldness of the Ku Klux so dumfounded the police, that the silent horsemen rode through the lines without being molested. Straight up Capitol Hill they marched and then down again, not a word was spoken, and once outside the city,

they entered the shadows of the forest. Down its dim aisles, lit by threads of moonbeams, the horsemen slowly wound their way to the appointed place. For the last time the Chaplain led in prayer, the men disrobed, drew from each horse his white mantle, opened a grave and soe[m]pnly buried their regalia, sprinkling the folds with the ashes of their burned ritual.

In this weird ceremony ended the most remarkable Revolution in many respects, in history. The Ku Klux Klan was born in mystery, lived in mystery, and mystery will ever shroud its grave."

Quoting from the writings of Major Lamar Fontaine, of Mississippi, "No tales of the Arabian Nights, no legend of the 'Border Land of Scotia,' nor of Richard Couer de Leon, in the land of the Moselm, when the Cross and Crescent, contended for supremacy in the Holy Crusades, can rival in heroic courage and daring, the romantic deeds of valor, performed by this mighty Invisible Army of the white men of the South. Here in all ages to come the Southern romancer and poet will find inspiration for story and song. That Invisible Army gave back to its beloved land much that she lost during four years of the bloody carnival of death, that

landed upon her fair form in the early sixties. Restored the majesty and grandeur, that were hers, and that was the envy of the nations of all the world in days gone by. No nobler or grander men ever gathered on this earth than those assembled in the meeting places of the Klan. No human hearts were ever moved with nobler impulses or higher aims of purpose. The maintenance of law and order, the preservation of the home, the protection of the virtue of the noblest womanhood in all the annals of time, moved these men to action.

In the courts of this invisible, silent, and mighty government, there were no hung juries, no laws delayed, no reversals, on senseless technicalities by any Supreme Court, because from its Court there was no appeal, and punishment was sure and swift, because there was no executive to pardon. After the negro had surrendered to the Ku Klux Klan, which he did by obeying their orders to the very letter,—for they feared that organization more than the devil and the dark regions,—the Invisible Empire vanished in a night, and has been seen no more by mortal man on this earth.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

CLOSING REFLECTIONS.

THE younger generation should know the true history of the Ku Klux Klan, and have the proper respect for this organization, which did so much for the South in her dark days. Children will be told all the false things concerning it, so we should see to it that they are told the truth. Encyclopedias, books of reference, and some histories, are full of false statements about the South, and information about the South's part in the War between the States, is very meager and unsatisfactory.

Our Southland, so conscious of her rectitude, so firm in her belief that she was "constitutionally and eternally right," and so proud of the heroism of her sons, has not felt the great necessity of vindicating her acts, but it behooves us now to see that the searchlights are turned on her part in the war, and let the world know the truth of her history.

Too long have we of the South remained silent, and perhaps our silence has been construed as an

acknowledgment of shame of being connected with the Ku Klux Klan and its history, whereas it should be our proudest boast, as it was organized and kept up by our best and noblest men, who had proven their worth and valor on so many battlefields, and who preserved the purity and domination of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Some day when the South comes to her own, when her magnificent resources have been developed and the riches of her mountains and her valleys drawn forth, there will be many great and good things to be said of her history. Men will never tire of speaking of this land of romance, so different in many essential respects from the rest of the country; and women will read, with joy and tears, the story of her long fought battle for supremacy. But when the tale is all told, and the history of her labors in war and in peace has been recounted, no brighter chapter in all her history, no fairer page will ever be read, than that which tells of that illustrious and glorious organization called the "Ku Klux Klan."

We should ever regard our history as a priceless heritage, cherish and keep green the traditions of the old South, keep alive its chivalrous spirit, and

never tire of telling the story of those lion-hearted men, who made this history for us, and around whose names cluster some of the greatest events of the past. Gladstone, the great English statesman, said, "No greater calamity can befall a people than to break utterly with its past; and if we forget our ancestors we ourselves are unworthy to be remembered."

When the great Napoleon had landed his forces on Egyptian soil and formed them in battle array, lifting his hand high in the air and pointing to the Pyramids, he exclaimed: "Soldiers, forty centuries behold you," and when we realize to-day, the valor of our noble sires and grandsires, the beauty and culture of our mothers and grandmothers are beholding us, we should indeed feel that we are treading on holy ground. The history they have made for us is our most precious and priceless heritage. The very name "Ku Klux Klan" holds one spell-bound. It is strange, weird, mysterious, fascinating. Formed from the Greek word, "Kuklos," meaning a circle, the name was prophetic of the great mission of the Klan, for it indeed formed a circle of protection around the homes and women of the South and brought them through the dark shadows of Recon-

struction Days, safe and unharmed. Let us think, then, of the Ku Klux Klan as a great circle of light, illuminated with deeds of love and patriotism, and holding within its protecting and shining circle, the very life and welfare of our beloved Southland.

In the midst of that dark drama, known as Reconstruction Days, a ray of light appears, the star of hope gleams again through the dark clouds, by which it had been obscured. The Ku Klux Klan, the great, silent organization of the '60's, appears upon the scene, with its avowed purpose to preserve and uphold the white civilization of the South. It was a creation born of necessitous times, of pure and patriotic impulses, and to relieve a dire and humiliating distress.

The Ku Klux Klan has been justly called, "the salvation of the South," and its history should be written in letters of light.

THE END.

GENERAL NATHAN BEDFORD FORREST.
BIOGRAPHICAL.

A BRIEF biography of this great General will not be amiss in this book, for his record in the service of the Confederacy, as well as during the period of Reconstruction, shows that he was not only great in War, but great in Peace.

It should be borne in mind, by the readers of this book, especially by our young people, that General Forrest, the intrepid Confederate Cavalry Leader, called "The Wizard of the Saddle," was also the leader of the Ku Klux Klan, with the title, "Grand Wizard of the Invisible Empire": as the Klan was also called.

His high standing as a Confederate officer, his devotion to his country, his noble principles and sacred honor pledged to protect the South, puts at naught forever any false statements as to the purposes of the Klan, and challenges any stigma or misrepresentations as to the character of its members, for they were in the main Confederate soldiers, and Forrest was its great leader, and under his leadership and with the loyalty of the members,



GENERAL NATHAN BEDFORD FORREST,
Grand Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan, or Invisible Empire.

This photo furnished by grandson of the great General, Adjutant General Nathan Bedford Forrest, United Sons Confederate Veterans.

the Mission of the Ku Klux Klan, or Invisible Empire, was successfully accomplished.

Nathan Bedford Forrest was born in Bedford County, Tennessee, July 13, 1821. His father moved to Marshall County, Mississippi, in 1834. General Forrest died at Memphis, Tennessee, October 29, 1877.

At the outbreak of the War between the States, he entered the Confederate service, and rose step by step from the position of a private in the ranks, to that of Lieutenant-General.

He entered June 14, 1861, as a private in White's Mounted Rifles, and obtained authority to raise a regiment of cavalry, the equipment for which he purchased at his private expense at Louisville, Ky.

He was placed in command of the Confederate Cavalry at Fort Donelson, February, 1862, and distinguished himself in this conflict. When surrender was decided upon, not being willing to agree to the terms dictated by the Federals, he led his men out through the enemy's lines.

He took an active part in the Battle of Shiloh, April 6-7, 1862; was there wounded, but refused to leave the field until the safety of the army was assured. He was promoted Brigadier-General July

21, 1862. During the movement in Kentucky, he hung upon the flank of Buell's Command, protected Bragg's retreat, and while the army was in winter quarters, covered the Federal front at Nashville, doing damage continually to the enemy.

In 1863 he entered Tennessee, and with less than one thousand men captured McMinnville, and surprised the garrison of two thousand at Murfreesboro, capturing all the survivors of the fight.

General Streight, in his Cavalry raid to Rome, Georgia, was pursued by General Forrest, whose demand for surrender was so imperative, that Streight turned over his entire command, which was so much larger than that of General Forrest, he had to press into service many of the citizens to help form an adequate guard.

At the Battle of Chickamauga, September 19-20, 1863, General Forrest also rendered distinguished service, but became so dissatisfied at the incompleteness of the Confederate victory, he tendered his resignation. However, this was not accepted, and further promotion was given him, and he was made Major-General, placed in command of all Cavalry in North Mississippi and West Tennessee, and made the guardian of the Granary of the Confederacy.

With a small force, he entered West Tennessee, and recruited several thousand hardy volunteers, and with some veteran troops, he formed that invincible body, known as "Forrest's Cavalry."

In 1864, he utterly routed General Smith with seven thousand men, and General Sherman in co-operation, at Okolona and Prairie Mound.

Forrest then rode through Tennessee to the Ohio River, capturing Fort Pillow, Union City, and other posts and their garrisons. On June 8, 1864, Forrest encountered General Sturgis at Brice's Cross Roads, and won a signal victory. Sturgis suffering one of the most humiliating defeats of the war, losing all his trains and a third of his men. General Smith renewed the fight, and was again defeated, after a desperate battle at Harrisburg, near Tupelo, on July 14, 1864.

His great victory at Tishomingo Creek, like all his victories, was won against great odds, showing his determination, personal courage and force of character, making him one of the most remarkable men in the Confederate service and the most famous Cavalry Leader of the Confederacy. After his defeat at Harrisburg, General A. J. Smith, with reinforcements, advanced from Memphis, but was

compelled to retreat by the intrepid Forrest. Then for awhile General Forrest played havoc with Federal transportation and garrisons in Tennessee, and at Johnsonville captured and destroyed six million dollars worth of the enemy's supplies, and also a gun boat fleet.

The Federal General Sherman wrote of this, "That was a 'feat of arms,' which I must confess, excited my admiration." On another occasion, Sherman complimented Forrest. When he was making his raid through Georgia, Forrest was following him closely and giving him so much trouble in the rear, it has been stated, that General Sherman telegraphed to the War Department at Washington "To keep that devil Forrest off my heels, if it takes ten thousand men to do it."

After the fall of Atlanta, he joined General Hood at Florence, Alabama, and fought at the bloody battle of Franklin and at Nashville.

As Commander of the Rear Guard of the retreating Confederate Army, Forrest showed those heroic qualities, which caused him to be likened to the wonderful Marshal Ney, who covered the retreat of the great Napoleon from Moscow. European authorities have pronounced Forrest the most

magnificent Cavalry Officer that America has produced.

He was promoted Lieutenant-General February, 1865, and given the duty to guard the frontier from Decatur, Alabama, to the Mississippi.

He made his last fight at Selma, Alabama, and there on May 9th surrendered his command. It has been stated that he was under fire 179 times during the four years of war, and he stated, "That his provost marshal's book would show that he had taken 31,000 prisoners.

Some writer said, "Forrest was not taught at West Point, but he gave lessons to West Point."

This expression of General Forrest has become famous, "War means killing, and the way to kill is to get there first with the most men."

Senator Daniel said of him, "What genius was in that wonderful man. He felt the field, as Blind Tom touches the keys of the piano."

Such was the brilliant record of General Forrest in that conflict of arms, the War between the States, while in peace his allegiance to duty and his country was equally pronounced, for during the dark days of Reconstruction, a period more terrible even than the War itself, with the Ku

Klux Klan, of which he was the Supreme Officer, the South was redeemed from destruction.

Many great monuments have been erected to his memory, but his greatest monument is erected in the hearts of the people of the Southland, whom he loved so well and served so faithfully.

All honor to General Nathan Bedford Forrest,—
Leader of the Confederate Cavalry, and of the Ku
Klux Klan.

Note:—The facts for the above biographical sketch were obtained from the Confederate Military History, Vol. I.

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